

Best Hiring Practices

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Introduction

Hiring Managers need to know as much as possible about an individual that they are bringing into the organization. Good pre-screening practices are a critical component in the hiring process (American Society of Employers, n.d). One of the cardinal mistakes managers make when hiring is rushing to find a set of qualities. People seek vague qualities such as composure, leadership, motivation, teamwork-oriented, which are hard to define. To hire the right candidates, managers must be specific about what they are looking for in a candidate.

Many employers are not aware of the liability associated with inadequate employment screening methods. As a result, employers increase their exposure to an array of criminal activity like workplace violence, and employee fraud. These can lead to lawsuits stemming from negligent hiring, which hold employers liable for hiring an unfit applicant, and negligent retention, which holds an employer liable for retaining an unfit employee (American Society of Employers, n.d).

Employers who are conscious of protecting the interests of the organization, and its employees, must make informed hiring choices. Information helps facilitate the hiring process by clearly identifying the right candidate, and then providing as much data as possible about the knowledge, skills abilities and interests that the applicant has for meeting the job's requirements (American Society of Employers, n.d.).

Candidates must also be motivated to find out as much as they can about their potential employer. It is important for them to research and ask questions about the company they are interviewing with. Asking questions about the company's culture and the role and expectations

of the new position, shows that the candidate is interested in finding out more about the company's working environment, and trait(s) that are needed for the position. This can help the candidate decide whether the job is a good fit for them.

Ultimately, smart hiring practices include completion of the company's required paperwork, a complete series of interviews with the organization's representatives, an assessment of the skills, and interests, possibly a drug test, and notably a thorough reference check, and background investigation.

Reference checking and background investigations include two categories of information, that which is public information, and that which can be obtained through interviews with former employers, educational institutions, and character references. Public information is maintained and made available to the public upon request. This category of information can include a variety of criminal record searches at the local, state, and national levels, a motor vehicle record search for driving history information, social security number verification, and an employment credit report.

There are several other searches that are available. However, justifying a case for "need to know" in an employment situation can be treacherous waters for employers to tread. Gathering information through interviews, and verifications of work history that the applicant provides can be a tedious process for overworked employers. However, if done correctly, this data will provide insight into previous applicant behavior, which is typically an indicator of future performance.

Obtaining reference checks can be either positive or negative. While most former employers will confirm basic employment information such as dates of employment, position held, and eligibility for rehire, progressive employers are also providing documented

performance information, either positive or negative, to support the business community. Employers who have documented detrimental information regarding an employee's work history, but who do not share it with an inquiring potential employer can be held liable for negligent referral by providing misleading employment history (American Society of Employers, n.d.).

After gathering information about a potential applicant, two factors should be kept in mind while compiling a report. Any information collected needs to be linked to a job requirement. Once the information is compiled one must be sure to apply it in accordance with employment laws including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1974, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Worker Authorization/INS I-9 procedures, to name a few. These are just some of the areas that will be touched upon throughout this paper. It is vitally important for managers, and organizations to know the proper procedure for "Good Hiring Practices".

According to Recruiting Trends (2002), a survey developed by the human resource consulting firm Development Dimensions International (DDI), a web-based recruiting resource Electronic Recruiting Exchange (ERE), revealed what keeps successful organizations on top. They do not just glance at a resume, and then hire whoever looks good on paper, but instead they use four modern hiring practices to find top talent. The study revealed that the organizations with the most effective hiring policies were more likely to use the following four practices: (a) Job interviews in which candidates are asked to describe specific examples of their skills, (b) Automated resume screening, and search (c) Assessments that predict whether candidates are motivated by the factor associated with a particular job or a company's values, and ways of doing this, and (d) Simulations that gauge specific job-related abilities, and skills.

Filling an open position with the right candidate is one of the most challenging part of a hiring manager's job. It is time consuming, demanding, and pressure packed, especially since choosing the wrong person can set an organization back hundreds of thousands of dollars (Paycor.com). The Department of Labor estimates replacing a bad hire can cost on average, one-third their annual salary and negatively impact employee morale. Even with a price tag this high, many employers are rushed into bad decisions by hiring too quickly. The Harvard Business Review indicates that as much as 80% of employee turnover is a direct result of poor hiring decisions. However, open positions create gaps in productivity, which can put undue stress on remaining employees, lead to errors and create an overall sense of frustration and burnout.

As we begin to look at the hiring process at Lander and in many other organizations, we realize how complex this process is becoming. Changing regulations, well-publicized court rulings, watchdog groups and a more sophisticated work force all mean companies must be very careful about their hiring practices. As I researched this topic, I am compelled, to incorporate the six tips Paycor.com recommends to help our University navigate the demands of hiring.

1. **Manage all hiring in one place.** The best way to consolidate and manage your hiring data is to automate your applicant tracking. This allows you to store past and current data in one location and keep track of candidates for future openings if they do not meet our needs right away. Automation also allows organizations to track candidates throughout the hiring process and manage their information consistently and securely, without fear of lost paperwork. Our Human Resources Department is in the process of researching and negotiating to find a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) that will assist us in streamlining this process.

2. **Analyze best places to find talent.** It is important to track the sources of all candidates, such as job search websites and social networking sites like LinkedIn. Organizations must understand what works for your organization and where you find value in paying for listings or spending time searching and posting.
3. **Build a robust careers webpage.** Your website is an applicant's first impression of your business and your brand. Integrate your application process with your careers page, focusing on usability and reliability to ensure you do not lose top candidates because of technical issues or a poor user experience. Your careers page is a direct reflection of your company, include information about open positions, as well as benefits, culture, potential career paths, company news and awards. Offer insight into what it is really like to work at your organization. Be consistent with your brand to set expectations for candidates and get them excited before they even walk through the door.
4. **Make decisions electronically.** Use technology in your hiring process to guard against ever losing a resume and maybe a great new hire. Create a binary yes/no decision process for your interview team. By doing this, no candidate is stuck in the maybe category and potentially forgotten or overlooked.
5. **Understand bottlenecks in your process.** Analyze your hiring process: How long does it take? Which parts take longer than others? If the process bogs down, you risk losing top candidates to competitors with more efficient processes. There are five metrics that Paycor recommends organizations look at for staffing success.
 - Time to pursue. How long is the process from application to resume review to phone screen to interview?

- Where are candidates in the process: Does one stage seem to move more slowly than others? What, or who, might be causing that?
- Open Requisitions: How many openings does your organization have? How many are newly created roles vs. replacement roles?
- Time to fill: Anticipate the length of the process and manage expectations of leadership by providing them with realistic timeframes. Some position types will take longer to fill than others.
- Turnover: Tracking turnover is essential, especially within the first 90 days of employment. It is important to do exit interviews to understand why low-tenure people are leaving the organization. Exit interviews can reveal gaps in your recruitment process and illustrate what to fix in the future.

6. **Monitor Compliance.** Understand and avoid Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs regulations and the major fines that can come with violations. Use consistent, legal processes for hiring or rejecting candidates, and keep strong documentation to show why a candidate was or was not selected.

To begin the process of selecting qualified people, companies must be very careful about the questions they ask in an employment interview. The questions must be consistent, legal, and job related. Each candidate must be asked the same questions. Managers must be ready to prove that they have given each candidate an equal opportunity to satisfy the requirements of the specific job for which they are being interviewed.

It is important that managers and supervisors understand and know that provisions of various federal laws affect the types of questions that organizations may ask an applicant during

an employment interview. Interviewers must be familiar with employment laws that govern their state. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, sex, color, national origin and religion. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 prohibits questions about a person's age. The wide-ranging Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination in employment and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 prohibits employers from collecting and using genetic information.

The candidate interview is a vital component of the hiring process. To hire the most qualified candidates, human resource professionals and hiring managers must be well informed of how to conduct interviews effectively. Employers must be aware of federal and state prohibitions on asking certain types of questions during employment interviews. It is important that appropriate guidelines are followed to avoid claims of discrimination or bias in hiring and knowing what questions not to ask applicants.

Interviewing is an important step in the employee selection process. If done effectively, the interview enables the employer to determine if an applicant's skills, experience and personality meet the job's requirements. It also helps the employer assess whether an applicant would likely fit in with the corporate culture. In addition, preparing for an interview can help clarify a position's responsibility. With careful preparation, HR professionals and hiring managers can make the most of employment interviews and obtain the information they need. Proper planning includes selecting a method of interviewing, whether structured or unstructured, telephone prescreening, direct one on one, or panel interviews.

To help the validity and effectiveness of employment interviews, the interviewer must prepare in advance. Interviewers must know how to elicit desired information from job

candidates. Employers should ask applicants about specific incidents in the workplace. Questions should be designed to show how the candidate has displayed the required skills in specific situations during his or her career. According to Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM), interviewers should become familiar with the types of questions and statements that must be avoided in any interview. For example, interviewers should not make statements that could be constructed as creating a contract of employment. When describing the job, it is best to avoid using terms such as ‘permanent,’ “career job opportunity,” or “long term.” In addition, to minimize the risk of discrimination lawsuits, interviewers must familiarize themselves with topics that are not permissible as interview questions.

At Lander, once the Office of Human Resources is notified of a vacancy or position needing to be filled, our Employment Coordinator communicates with the hiring manager regarding their needs for the position. At which time they email an interview hiring packet to the hiring manager. The interview hiring packet includes interview tools that are recommended for the hiring process and includes: Telephone Interview Evaluation form, Interview questions, Candidate Interview Evaluation/scoring tool, Candidate Justification Form, Orientation Checklist, Sample letter to unsuccessful candidates, Email Confirmation Letter for Interview, and the Telephone Reference Check Form.

Currently, our Human Resources department is not a part of the interview panel for Lander University. However, it is our goal to ensure our hiring practices are appropriate, consistent and assists us in obtaining the best qualified applicant for the position. To assist us in obtaining this goal, a faculty and staff hiring committee has developed as part of our Diversity Advisory Council (DAC). This is a diverse group of faculty and staff who hold positions as Vice President for Student Affairs, Human Resources Director, Employment Coordinator, University

Professors and IT Consultants. We will begin looking at our current hiring practices and developing strategies to assist us in recruiting and retaining top talent to include a diverse applicant pool.

At Lander University, we are currently looking at ways to enhance our recruitment, hiring, and selection process across departmental lines. The process by which employees are selected is clearly the most critical and controllable variable in the development of a productive and successful workforce. The candidate interview is a vital part of this process. It is imperative that we hire employees based on their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and not merely on who we know. It has been shared with Human Resources that several of Lander managers and supervisors based their hiring decision on who they know rather than selecting the candidate who is the best qualified for the position. Usually, this type scenario is shared with Human Resources when a conflict or Employee Relations issue arises, and management finds it difficult to manage or handle the conflict when it comes to applying disciplinary action(s).

Purpose

Lander University's mission is to offer high-demand and market-driven programs to ambitious and talented students in South Carolina and beyond. These programs are delivered in a rich liberal arts environment to produce highly qualified and marketable graduates. Our goal is to ensure we attract and obtain highly qualified and diverse faculty and staff to educate and train our students to be well rounded citizens as they prepare to launch their careers.

To evaluate whether managers and supervisors view our universities hiring practices as a good, and effective process, a "Best Hiring Practices Survey" (Appendix A), was conducted in November of 2018. The survey was developed in Google docs and sent by email to a sample

group of 25 managers and supervisors within the university. A total of 18 surveys were returned electronically through Google docs. The results of the survey are attached (Appendix B).

A five-point Likert scale was used to address each response from the survey. Each manager, and supervisor had the opportunity to rate fifteen questions as Always, Almost Always, Sometimes, Almost Never, and Never.

Methodology

In reviewing, and computing the survey results, focus was on seven questions that are necessary and essential to having skillful and effective hiring practices in an organization. These seven questions are as follows: (a) I believe our interview process is fair and consistent, (b) I review the university's hiring procedure before conducting interviews, (c) I apply employment laws during the interview and hiring process, (d) I consider whether or not a vacant position should be filled and complete the positions description for this process, (e) I consider the versatility of the candidates being interviewed, (f) I believe the hiring officials (panel) in our university are properly trained, (g) I consider Affirmative Action goals when hiring new employees.

These seven questions were reviewed to determine in what areas managers and supervisors think our university is most effective and in what areas training may be needed to ensure our universities' hiring process is fair, consistent, and handled in a legal, and accurate manner. The data collected from the survey was used to:

- Look at potential training needs of our supervisor/hiring staff;
- Improve/Enhance our current hiring practices;
- Analyze our talent search efforts;

- Ensure hiring processes are consistent and legal; and
- Assist in attaining our Affirmative Action goals.

In analyzing our data, based on feedback from our supervisors, 50% of managers and supervisors believe our interview process is “almost always” fair and consistent. 44.4% “always” view the university’s hiring procedures before conducting interviews; 50% indicated they “always” apply employment laws during the interview and hiring process, while 11.1% indicated they “never” do; 72.2% indicated they “always” consider whether or not a vacant position should be filled and completes a position description for this process; 72.2% indicated they “always” consider the versatility of the candidates being interviewed; 44.4% “almost always” believe the hiring officials (panel) in our university are properly trained for the task; and 33.3% “almost always” consider Affirmative Action goals when hiring new employees, while 27.8% sometimes considers Affirmative Action goals when hiring new employees.

The above information shows that based on a five-point Likert scale, managers and supervisors at our university feel we are doing a reasonably good job with our hiring practices, however, there is room for improvement. Some of the verbal comments made by managers and supervisors were they would like to have more training on effective hiring practices, they would like for Human Resources to have a more active role in the interview process to ensure consistency, to recruit and hire a more diverse work force, and to ensure employment laws are practiced.

They also voiced concerns of how cumbersome the interview process is, and staff not feeling comfortable with conducting the interviews. More attention is being placed in this area for all managers, and supervisors. It is important for them to know, understand, and apply skills that are appropriate for the interview process. They must also maintain fairness, and equality

along with considering, and applying employment laws as needed. Managers must understand and know the importance of their role and responsibility in this process. They should be able to conduct an effective, and legal interview whether Human Resources is part of the interview or not. One of the first things managers and supervisors must do is determine what they are looking for during the interview process. This may seem obvious, but many employment specialists and line managers fail to do this. They think they have a good idea of what they are looking for, so they do not bother to analyze the job and its requirements. Line people have firsthand knowledge of the jobs under their supervision, and this gives them an advantage over the personnel staff who work from second-hand information. Even so, studies have shown that many managers lack a clear understanding of their employee's job and the duties, responsibilities, and problems involved (Personnel Practices).

According to Monster.com, all the tools of recruiting, budgeting, job descriptions, planning, search, sourcing, assessment, interviewing, onboarding, etc. must be assessed as to whether they are attracting a diverse audience. Diversity is a mainstream value, woven into daily work life in various forms, such as airing different points of view or soliciting input from a wide range of employees. More hiring mistakes are made in the 30 minutes of the interview than at any other time. First impressions, personal biases, stereotypes and prejudices unconsciously come into play when the interviewer and candidate meet in person for the first time. If the interviewer does not like someone during this brief encounter, the person will not get hired. Competency is irrelevant. And if the interviewer likes the person, competency is overlooked. Strengths are magnified, and weaknesses ignored. Personality and first impressions as measured in the interview are not good predictors of subsequent performance. Some candidates can fake

being nice and put on their “party personality”. Other candidates are somewhat nervous, and it takes a while for them to reveal their true selves.

As the Interim Human Resources Director for Lander University, and the supervisor of the Employment Coordinator position, it is my responsibility to ensure managers and supervisors receive the necessary training, education, and tools they will need before conducting an interview. This process was implemented in July of 2018 when we conducted our first “Best Hiring/Interviewing Practice” Training. We had a total of 46 managers and supervisors to attend the training. The feedback from this training was both positive and helpful in helping us to identify next steps. Feedback from the training revealed the need for managers and supervisors to better understand and embrace their role and responsibility in the hiring process. Our plan is to continue to do annual training on Best Hiring/Interviewing practices, to build a more structured interview process for interview panels, to meet with new supervisors and supervisors that have not hired over a one-year period to review hiring practices and procedures, and to continue to review and monitor or recruitment efforts in hiring a diverse workforce.

Conclusion

Incorporating effective hiring practices in an organization, will almost always result in matching the right person, to the right job, in the right way. If this is done by organizations, they will increase morale, productivity and quality, as well as decrease turnover, training needs, and potential legal problems. If organizations do not take the time and effort to match all three of the above, workload, production, service problems, as well as customer complaints and cost including legal, will rise. As we work to improve our hiring process, we are also working towards accomplishing our University’s Pillar 9 Strategic Plan goal of becoming “Employer of Choice.” The measures that we have taken to ensure effective hiring practices in our hiring

process have been reasonably successful thus far. However, as listed above, there are still steps we must take to ensure this process will be a successful match for both our university, and the applicant.

References

“Best Hiring Practices.” American Society of Employers.

<https://www.aseonline.org/Talent-Acquisition/Interview-Management-System>

“Best Hiring Practices.” Monster.com <https://hiring.monster.com/hr/hr-best-practices.aspx>

“Best Hiring Practices.” Paycor.com <https://www.paycor.com/resource-center/6-best-practices-for-hiring-right>

Appendix A

Best Hiring Practices Survey

Appendix A

This questionnaire contains statements about hiring practices. Under each statement select the box that represents how strongly you feel about the statement by using the following scoring system:

* Required

I believe our interview process is fair and consistent. *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I review the university's hiring procedure before conducting interviews. *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I apply employment laws during the interview and hiring process. *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I consider whether or not a vacant position should be filled and completes a position description for this process. *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I consider the versatility of the candidates being interviewed. *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I ensure the advantages of working for our university are "sold" during the interviewing process. *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I analyze the sources of applicants before beginning recruiting efforts. *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I believe the right people do the right hiring at our university. *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I believe the hiring officials (panel) in our university are properly trained for the task. *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I believe our overall hiring system is "user friendly" *

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix A Continued

I look for a person that will "fit in". *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Always

I consider Affirmative Action goals when hiring new employees.

*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Always

I consider all applicants when hiring for a vacant position. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Always

I hire individuals who bring diversity to my existing staff. *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Always

SUBMIT

Appendix B

Best Hiring Practice Survey Results

QUESTIONS **RESPONSES** 18

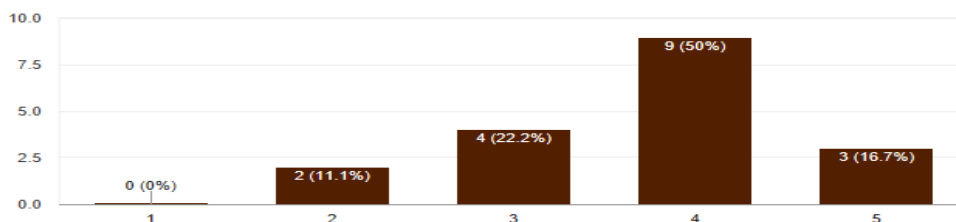
18 responses + ⋮

SUMMARY INDIVIDUAL

Accepting responses

I believe our interview process is fair and consistent.

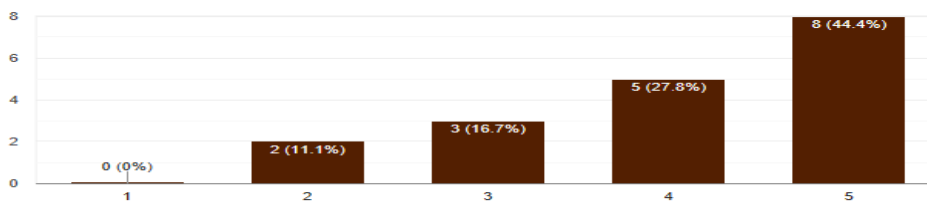
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QUESTIONS **RESPONSES** 18

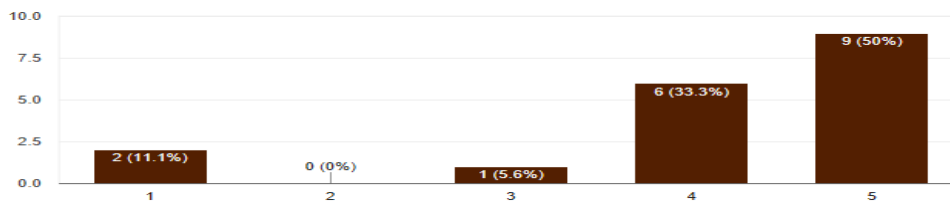
I review the university's hiring procedure before conducting interviews.

18 responses



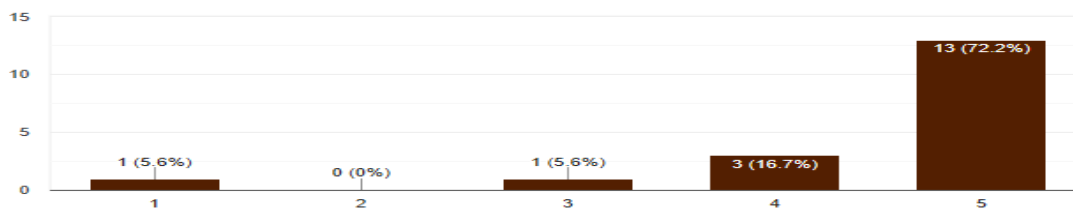
I apply employment laws during the interview and hiring process.

18 responses



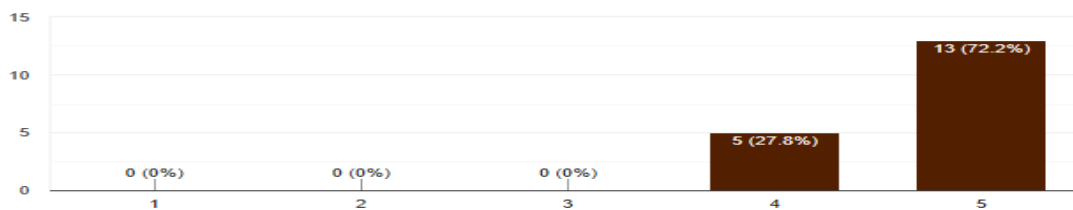
I consider whether or not a vacant position should be filled and completes a position description for this process.

18 responses



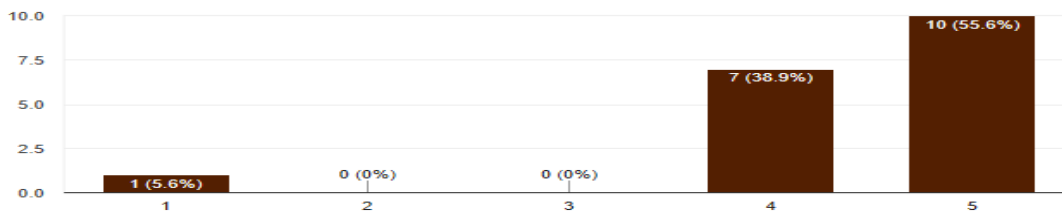
I consider the versatility of the candidates being interviewed.

18 responses



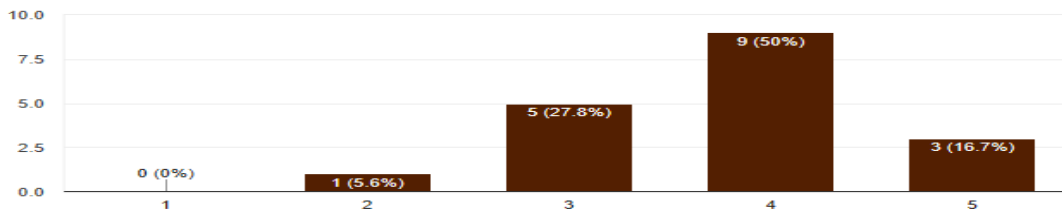
I ensure the advantages of working for our university are "sold" during the interviewing process.

18 responses



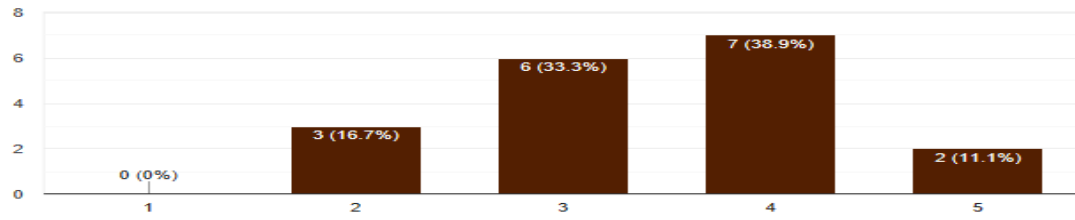
I analyze the sources of applicants before beginning recruiting efforts.

18 responses



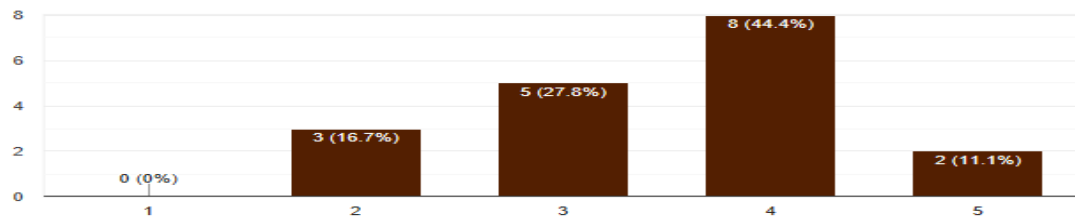
I believe the right people do the right hiring at our university.

18 responses



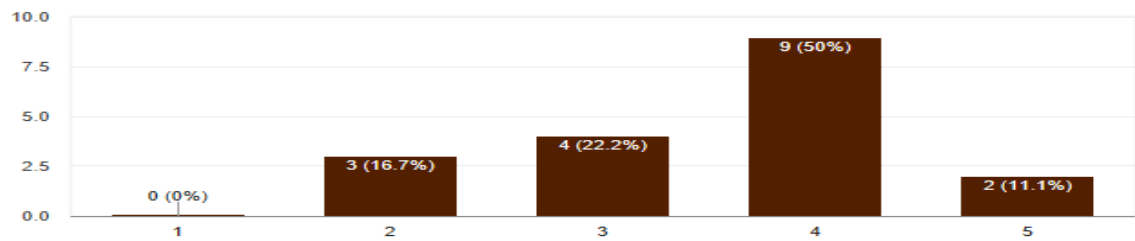
I believe the hiring officials (panel) in our university are properly trained for the task.

18 responses



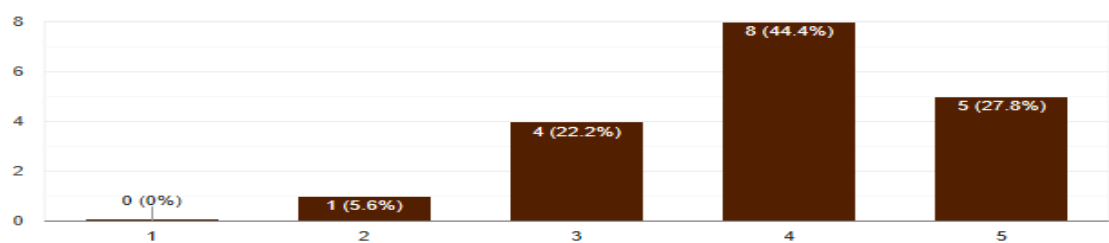
I believe our overall hiring system is "user friendly"

18 responses



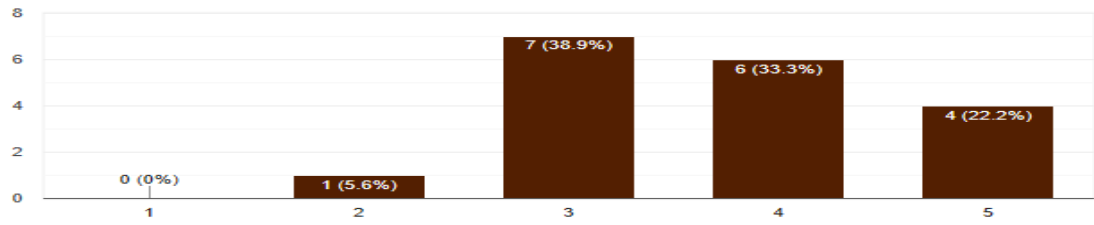
I hire individuals who will "challenge" my department?

18 responses



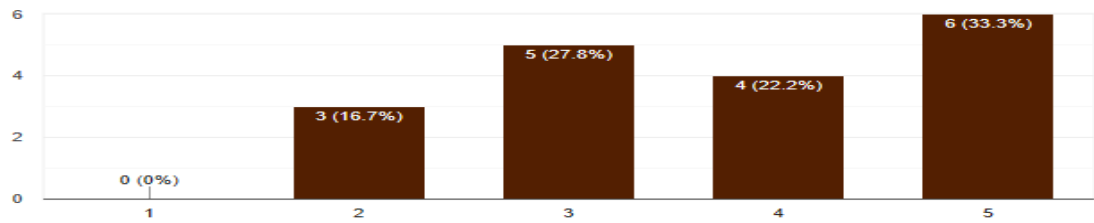
I look for a person that will "fit in".

18 responses



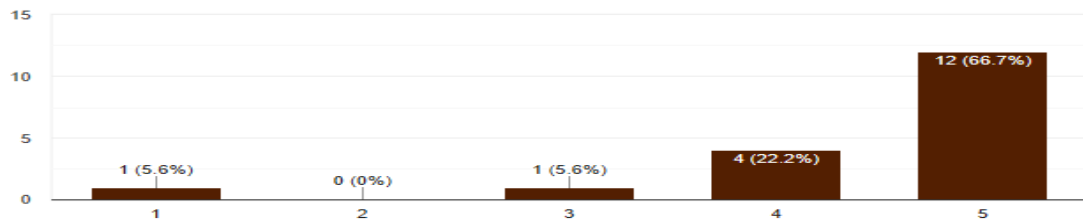
I consider Affirmative Action goals when hiring new employees.

18 responses



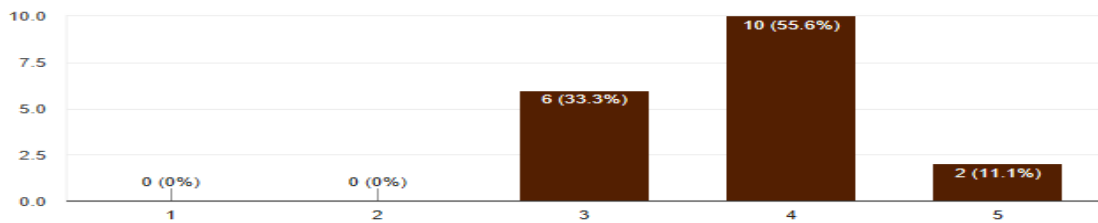
I consider all applicants when hiring for a vacant position.

18 responses

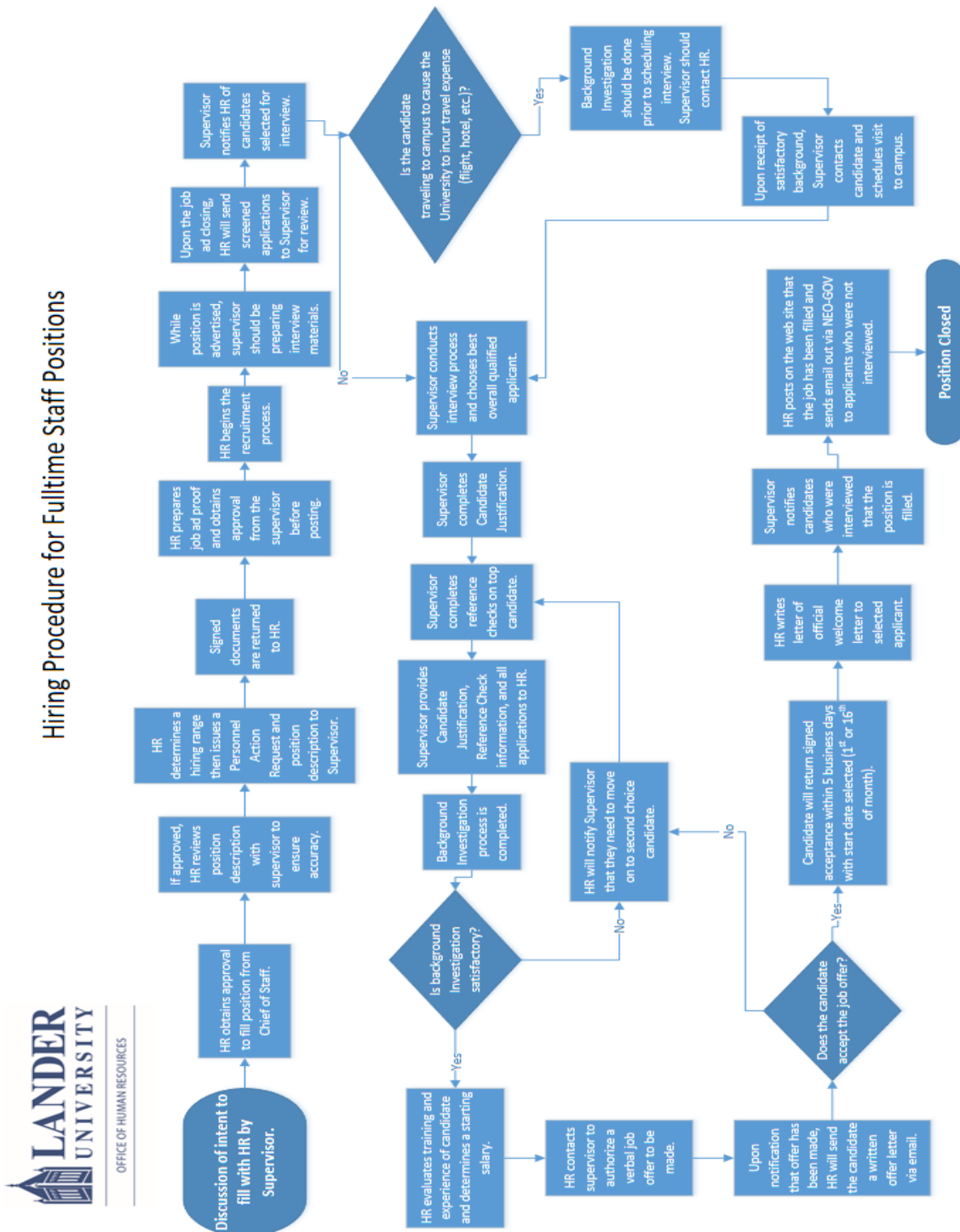


I hire individuals who bring diversity to my existing staff.

18 responses



Appendix C- Lander University Hiring Procedure for Fulltime Staff Positions



OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES